

Labourers (Ireland) Bill

[AS AMENDED IN COMMITTEE.]

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B I L L

[AS AMENDED IN COMMITTEE]

TO

Better the condition of Labourers in Ireland.

A.D. 1883.

BE it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1. This Act may be cited for all purposes as the Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883. Short title.

2. This Act shall extend to Ireland only.

Extent of
Act.
Description
of rural
sanitary
districts and
rural sanitary
authority.
41 & 42 Vict.
c. 52. s. 6.

3. For the purposes of this Act the terms "rural sanitary district" (herein-after called the sanitary district) and "rural sanitary authority" (herein-after called the sanitary authority) shall have the meanings assigned to them respectively by the sixth section of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, and this Act shall, in so far as is consistent with the scope and tenor thereof, be construed as one with the said Act.

15 *Scheme by Sanitary Authority.*

4. Where a representation as herein-after mentioned is made to the sanitary authority that the existing house accommodation for agricultural labourers and their families within any section of the sanitary district, to be defined in such representation, is deficient, having regard to the ordinary requirements of the district, or is unfit for human habitation owing to dilapidation, the want of light, air, ventilation, or proper conveniences, or to any other sanitary defects, and that such deficiency or sanitary defects cannot be effectually remedied otherwise than by an improvement scheme for the erection of other dwellings in lieu of or in addition to the dwellings already existing in the section, the sanitary authority

Sanitary
authority to
make im-
provement
scheme.

[Bill 240.]

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shall take such representation into their consideration at a meeting of which not less than fourteen days public notice has been given, and of which a special notice has been sent to each member of the sanitary authority not less than fourteen days before the day of meeting, and if satisfied of the truth thereof, and of the sufficiency 5 of their resources, shall pass a resolution that an improvement scheme ought to be made in respect of such section, and after passing such resolution they shall forthwith proceed to make a scheme for the improvement of such section.

The sanitary authority may from time to time postpone their 10 decision as to passing a resolution, or may postpone the making of a scheme, to any subsequent meeting specified by them at the time of such postponement, and in such case not less than three days notice of such meeting shall be sent to each member of the sanitary authority. 15

Two or more sections may be included in one improvement scheme.

The Local Government Board may, if they think fit, exercise for the purposes of this Act the powers conferred upon them by the twelfth section of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, of forming 20 two or more sanitary districts or contributory places into a united district, as if the purposes of this Act were among the purposes specified in the said section; and the provisions of section thirteen of the said Act as to the governing body of a united district, and of section fourteen as to the constitution of a joint board, shall apply 25 in the case of such united district, and such united district shall be deemed to be a rural sanitary district for the purposes of this Act.

Representa-
tion by
whom to
be made.

5. A representation in pursuance of the last preceding section shall mean a representation signed by not less than twelve persons rated for the relief of the poor within the sanitary district. The 30 representation, if made on the ground of insufficient house accommodation, shall set forth specific instances of such insufficiency, and if made on the ground of sanitary defects shall be accompanied by a certificate of a sanitary officer of the sanitary authority to which the representation is made in corroboration of the sanitary defects 35 alleged. The representation shall also define the section to which the scheme is to apply, and shall contain a suggestion on the part of the signatories as to the locality or localities in their opinion most suitable for the erection of the proposed new dwellings.

Requisites
of improve-
ment scheme

6. The improvement scheme of a sanitary authority shall be 40 accompanied by maps, particulars, and estimates; it may exclude

any part of the section in respect of which a representation is made, or may include any neighbouring lands within that district if the sanitary authority are of opinion that such exclusion is expedient or inclusion is necessary for making their scheme efficient for the purposes for which it is intended; it shall distinguish the lands proposed to be taken compulsorily. It shall further propose the erection of a sufficient number of labourers cottages so as to provide for the accommodation of the labouring class in suitable dwellings, with the requisite approaches to such dwellings; it shall also provide for proper sanitary arrangements, and for a plot or garden not exceeding half a statute acre being allotted to each dwelling. It may also provide for such schemes or any part thereof being carried out and effected by the person entitled to the first estate of freehold in any property subject to the scheme or with the concurrence of such person, under the superintendence and control of the sanitary authority, and upon such terms and conditions to be embodied in the scheme as may be agreed upon between the sanitary authority and such person. The scheme shall also specify the area which the sanitary authority propose as the area upon which the cost to be incurred in carrying the scheme into execution shall be charged.

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of sanitary
authority.

Confirmation of Scheme.

7. Upon the completion of an improvement scheme the sanitary authority shall publish during three consecutive weeks in the month of September, or October, or November in some two or more newspapers circulating within the jurisdiction of the sanitary authority, an advertisement stating the fact of a scheme having been made, the limits of the section to which the scheme relates, the estimated cost of carrying the scheme into effect, and the proposed area of charge, and naming a convenient place where a copy of the scheme may be seen at all reasonable hours: and during the month next following the month in which such advertisement is published serve a notice on every owner or reputed owner, lessee or reputed lessee, and occupier of any lands proposed to be taken compulsorily, so far as such persons can reasonably be ascertained, stating that such lands are proposed to be taken compulsorily for the purpose of an improvement scheme, and in the case of any owner or reputed owner, lessee or reputed lessee, requiring an answer stating whether the person so served dissents or not in respect of taking such lands, such notice to be served—

Proceedings
for the con-
firmation of
the improve-
ment scheme.

(a.) By delivery of the same personally to the person required to be served, or, if such person is absent abroad or cannot be found,

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to his agent, or if no agent can be found, then by leaving the same on the premises; or

(b.) By leaving the same at the usual or last known place of abode of such person as aforesaid; or

(c.) By forwarding the same by post in a prepaid letter addressed to the usual or last known place of abode of such person.

One notice addressed to the occupier or occupiers without naming him or them and left at any house shall be deemed to be a notice served on the occupier or on all the occupiers of any such house.

Petition to
Local Government
Board.

Upon compliance with the provisions contained in this section with respect to the publication of advertisements and the service of notices, the sanitary authority shall present a petition to the Local Government Board praying that an order may be made confirming such scheme. The petition shall be accompanied by a copy of the scheme, and shall state the names of the owners or reputed owners, lessees or reputed lessees, who have dissented in respect of the taking their lands, and shall be supported by such evidence as the Local Government Board may from time to time require.

If, on consideration of the petition and on proof of the publication of the proper advertisements and the service of the proper notices, the Local Government Board think fit to proceed with the case, they shall direct a local inquiry to be held for the purpose of ascertaining the correctness of the representation made as to the section, and the deficiency of houses for agricultural labourers and their sanitary defects, and the sufficiency of the scheme, and any local objections to be made to such scheme, and as to the propriety of confirming such scheme.

After receiving the report made upon such inquiry the Local Government Board may make a Provisional Order declaring the limits of the section to which the scheme relates, and authorising such scheme to be carried into execution. The Provisional Order shall also specify the areas which are to be contributory places for the purposes of this Act, upon which the expenses incurred under this Act are to be charged. Such Provisional Order may be made either absolutely or with such conditions and alterations of the scheme as the Local Government Board may think fit, so that no addition be made to the lands proposed in the scheme to be taken compulsorily, and it shall be the duty of the sanitary authority to serve a copy of any Provisional Order so made in the manner and upon the persons in which and upon whom notices in respect of lands proposed to be taken compulsorily are required by this Act to be served, except tenants for a month or a less period than a month.

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A Provisional Order made in pursuance of this section shall not be of any validity until and unless it has been confirmed by Act of Parliament, and it shall be lawful for the Local Government Board as soon as conveniently may be to obtain such confirmation; and any Provisional Order made in pursuance of this Act, when confirmed by Parliament with such modifications as may seem fit to Parliament, shall be deemed to be a Public General Act of Parliament, and is in this Act referred to as the confirming Act.

Any Act confirming any Provisional Order made in pursuance of this Act may be repealed, altered, or amended by any Provisional Order made by the Local Government Board and confirmed by Parliament.

The Local Government Board may make such order as they think fit in favour of any persons whose lands were proposed by the scheme to be taken compulsorily for the allowance of the reasonable costs, charges, and expenses properly incurred by him in opposing such scheme.

All costs, charges, and expenses incurred by the Local Government Board in relation to any Provisional Order under this Act shall, to such amount as the Local Government Board think proper to direct, and all costs, charges, and expenses of any person, to such amount as may be allowed by the Local Government Board in pursuance of the aforesaid power, shall be deemed to be an expense incurred by the sanitary authority under this Act, and shall be paid to the Local Government Board and to such person respectively, in such manner and at such times, and either in one sum or by instalments, as the Local Government Board may order, with power for the Local Government Board to direct interest to be paid, at such rate, not exceeding *five pence* in the hundred by the year, as the Local Government Board may determine, upon any sum for the time being due in respect of such costs, charges, and expenses as aforesaid.

Any order made by the Local Government Board in pursuance of this section may be made a rule of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice in Ireland, and be enforced accordingly.

8. A Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for confirming an improvement scheme under this Act shall become absolute, and shall take effect, without any Act of Parliament confirming the same, in case

(a) the order does not authorise the purchase or taking of any land otherwise than by agreement; and

Certain orders of the Local Government Board valid without confirmation by Parliament.

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(b) a petition against the order, signed by not less than three ratepayers liable to pay rates in respect of property situate within the area declared by such order to be chargeable, is not lodged with the Local Government Board within such time after the making and publication of the Provisional Order as the Local Government Board may from time to time by regulation prescribe.

Costs to be awarded in certain cases.

9. Where any Bill for confirming a Provisional Order authorising an improvement scheme is referred to a Committee of either House of Parliament upon the petition of any person opposing such Bill, the Committee shall take into consideration the circumstances under which such opposition was made to the Bill, and whether such opposition was or was not justified by such circumstances, and shall award costs accordingly to be paid by the promoters or the opponents of the Bill as the Committee may think just.

28 & 29 Vict. c. 27.

Any costs under this section may be taxed and recovered in the manner in which costs may be taxed and recovered under the Act of the session of the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter twenty-seven.

The decision of the majority of the members of the Committee for the time being present and voting on any question under this section shall be deemed to be the decision of the Committee.

Inquiry on refusal of sanitary authority to make an improvement scheme.

10. Where a representation is made to the sanitary authority with a view to their passing a resolution in favour of an improvement scheme, and they fail to pass any resolution in relation to such representation, or pass a resolution to the effect that they will not proceed with such scheme, such sanitary authority shall as soon as possible send a copy of the representation, accompanied by their reasons for not acting upon it, to the Local Government Board, and upon the receipt thereof the Local Government Board may, if they think it necessary, direct a local inquiry to be held and a report to be made to them with respect to the correctness of the representation made to the sanitary authority, and any matters connected therewith on which the Local Government Board may desire to be informed.

Execution of Scheme by Local Authority.

Execution of scheme by sanitary authority.

11. When the confirming Act authorising any improvement scheme of a sanitary authority under this Act has been passed by Parliament, it shall be the duty of that authority to take steps for

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purchasing the lands required for the scheme, and otherwise for carrying the scheme into execution, as soon as practicable. They may sell or let all or any part of such lands to any purchasers or lessees for the purposes and under the condition that such purchasers or lessees will, as respects the land so purchased by or leased to them, carry the scheme into execution, and in particular they may insert in any grant or lease of any part of the section provisions binding the grantor or lessee to build thereon as in the grant or lease prescribed, and to maintain and repair the buildings, and prescribing the maximum rents to be charged therefor, and prohibiting the division of buildings, and any addition to or alteration of the character of buildings, without the consent of the sanitary authority and of the Local Government Board, and for the re-vesting of the land in the sanitary authority, or their re-entry thereon on breach of any provision in the grant or lease, and also that there shall be allotted to each dwelling so to be erected by such grantor or lessee a plot of ground not exceeding half a statute acre.

Provided that in any grant or lease of any part of the section to which the scheme applies the sanitary authority, subject to the approval of the Local Government Board, shall impose suitable conditions and restrictions as to the elevation, size, and design of the dwellings and the extent of the accommodation to be afforded thereby, and shall make due provision for the maintenance of proper sanitary arrangements.

The sanitary authority may, where they think it expedient so to do, without themselves acquiring the land, or after or subject to their acquiring any part thereof, contract with the person entitled to the first estate of freehold in any land comprised in an improvement scheme for the carrying out of the schemes in respect of such land by such person.

12. It shall not be lawful for the sanitary authority to make a letting (save as expressly provided by this Act) of any tenement erected or acquired under this Act, or any part thereof, to any person other than an agricultural labourer.

Conditions
of lettings.
23 & 24 Vict.
c. 164, s. 61.

It shall not be lawful for the sanitary authority to permit any such tenement or part thereof to be held by any person other than an agricultural labourer as occupier thereof.

It shall not be lawful for the sanitary authority to make a letting of any such tenement to an agricultural labourer for a longer term than from month to month.

It shall be the duty of the sanitary authority to make lettings of

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A.D. 1883. the tenements erected or acquired by them under this Act upon such
 terms and conditions that the tenancies created by such lettings
 shall be cottier tenancies within the meaning of the Landlord and
 Tenant Law Amendment Act (Ireland), 1860, save only that the
 rents reserved in such lettings may exceed the limits prescribed by 5
 the eighty-first section of that Act; and tenancies created by a
 sanitary authority under this Act shall not be excluded from the
 provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Law Amendment Act
 (Ireland), 1860, which relate to cottier tenancies by reason only
 that the rents reserved exceed such limits. 10

Completion
 of scheme on
 failure by
 sanitary
 authority. 13. If within two years after the confirmation of any Provisional
 Order under this Act the sanitary authority have failed to make
 arrangements for the erection of labourers dwellings, the Local
 Government Board may order the said land to be sold by public
 auction or public tender, with full power to fix a reserve price, subject 15
 to the conditions imposed by the scheme, and to any modifications
 thereof which may be made in pursuance of this Act, and to a special
 condition on the part of the purchaser to erect upon the said land
 labourers dwellings in accordance with plans to be approved by the
 sanitary authority, and subject to such other reservations and regu- 20
 lations as the Local Government Board may deem necessary.

Power to
 purchase
 lands. 14. Any sanitary authority may for the purposes and subject to
 the provisions of this Act purchase or take on lease, sell, or ex-
 change any lands within their district, and may for the like purposes,
 or for the proper drainage or sanitary requirements of the labourers 25
 dwellings within their district, purchase, either within or without
 their district, any land covered with water, or any water or right to
 take or convey water. And for the purposes of such purchase the
 Lands Clauses Acts shall be incorporated with this Act; provided
 that the sanitary authority shall not purchase or take any lands 30
 otherwise than by agreement except under the authority of a
 Provisional Order confirmed by Parliament in accordance with this
 Act.

Any lands acquired by a sanitary authority in pursuance of any
 powers in this Act contained, and not required for the purpose for 35
 which they were acquired, shall, except where otherwise expressly
 provided by this Act (unless the Local Government Board other-
 wise direct), be sold at the best price that can be gotten for the
 same, and the proceeds of such sale, and also the proceeds of any
 other sale of lands acquired by a sanitary authority under this Act, 40
 and any fine paid to a sanitary authority on account of any letting
 of any such lands, shall be applied towards the discharge of any

principal moneys which have been borrowed by such authority on the security of the fund or rate applicable by them for the general purposes of this Act, or, if no such principal moneys are outstanding, shall be carried to the account of such fund or rate.

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Expenses of carrying Act into execution. 41 & 42 Vict. c. 62.

- 5 15. The expenses incurred by a sanitary authority in execution of this Act shall be special expenses within the meaning of Part Five of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878.

A sanitary authority shall have the same power of borrowing on the credit of the rates out of which special expenses are payable
10 under this Act as they have under the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, for sanitary purposes, and shall have the same power of mortgaging any property acquired by them under this Act as they have of mortgaging land to which section two hundred and thirty-nine of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, applies.

- 15 The following sections of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, shall be incorporated with this Act; (that is to say),

Section two hundred and thirty-eight, as to regulations concerning the exercise of borrowing powers; except sub-section (1) of that section :

- 20 Section two hundred and forty, as to form of mortgages :
Section two hundred and forty-one, as to register of mortgages :
Section two hundred and forty-two, as to transfer of mortgages :
Section two hundred and forty-three, as to the appointment of a receiver :

- 25 Section two hundred and forty-seven, as to the borrowing powers of joint boards.

16. The Treasury may authorise the Board of Works to advance from time to time, out of any moneys in their hands, to sanitary authorities, such sums as the Treasury think expedient for the
30 purposes of this Act.

Advance of money for purposes of Act.

Advances made by the Board of Works to a sanitary authority in pursuance of this section shall be repayable within such periods and at such rate of interest as are set forth in a Minute of the Treasury, made on the sixteenth day of August one thousand eight hundred
35 and seventy-nine, with reference to loans to which section two of the Public Works Loans Act, 1879, applies, or as the Treasury may from time to time fix in pursuance of that section, and, save as regards such periods and rate of interest, the enactments relating to loans made by the Board of Works under the Public Health
40 (Ireland) Act, 1878, shall, so far as is consistent with this section, apply in like manner as if an advance under this section were a loan made in pursuance of those enactments.

42 & 43 Vict. c. 77.

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Audit of
accounts.

17. The accounts of a rural sanitary authority, acting in execution of this Act, shall be audited in the same manner, and with the same powers in the officers auditing the same, and subject to the same provisions as the accounts of that authority in its character of sanitary authority are for the time being required to be audited 5 according to law.

Interpreta-
tion of terms.

18. In this Act, if not inconsistent with the context, the following terms have the meanings herein-after respectively assigned to them; (that is to say,)

"Local Government Board" means the Local Government Board 10 for Ireland:

8 & 9 Vict.
c. 18.23 & 24 Vict.
c. 106.14 & 15 Vict.
c. 70.23 & 24 Vict.
c. 67.27 & 28 Vict.
c. 71.14 & 15 Vict.
c. 70.

"Lands Clauses Acts" means and includes the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, as the same is amended by the Lands Clauses Consolidation Acts Amendment Act, 1860; the Railways Act (Ireland), 1851; the Railways Act (Ireland), 1860; the 15 Railways Act (Ireland), 1864; and the Railway Traverse Act:

"Treasury" means the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury:

"Board of Works" means the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland:

The term "Agricultural Labourer" means a person who habitually 20 works for hire in agricultural work upon the land of some other person, and whose principal means of living is such hire; and includes a herdsman. The term does not include any person who is not paid for his labour by wages.

Labourers (Ireland).

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B I L L

[AS AMENDED BY COMMITTEE]

To better the condition of Labourers in
Ireland.

*(Prepared and brought in by
Mr. P. B. O'Shea, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Joseph
O'Shea, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Lister.)*

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